

Weatherization Is a Sure Bet for Nevada

Nevada is famous for its lavish casinos and opulent nightlife. Stories of high rollers and jackpot winnings lend a surreal atmosphere of prosperity to the state. However, this glamorous image does not reflect reality for most residents. Many Nevadans struggle just to pay their energy bills. Low-income families in particular shoulder a disproportionate energy burden. To alleviate this burden, Nevada partners with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to deliver the Weatherization Assistance Program (Weatherization). Weatherization reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, while ensuring their health and safety.

Low-income households typically spend 14% of their total annual income on energy, compared with 3.5% for other households. This burden becomes even more unmanageable when energy prices rise or summer temperatures soar. Low-income families often have to cut back on other necessities to pay their energy bills. Weatherization measures reduce home energy consumption, which provides a long-term boost to the household's budget.

RAISING THE STAKES

Nevada's rapid growth serves to compound its energy challenges. In the last 10 years, Nevada has experienced a 50% increase in population growth. This is five times more than the national average. As the demand for energy increases, low-income families feel a tighter squeeze.

In addition, Nevada's rapid growth has strained the availability of safe, affordable housing. Weatherization protects the health and safety of low-income clients by diagnosing energy-related hazards. This increases the durability and safety of the state's affordable housing stock.

NATIONAL WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

Homes weatherized in 1999	68,000
DOE allocations in 1999	\$135 million
Average annual energy cost savings per household	\$300
Average space heating savings	25-30%
Energy benefits returned for every \$1 invested	\$2.10
Jobs supported	7,000

NEVADA

Homes weatherized in 1999 (with DOE \$)	201
DOE funding in 1999	\$473,631
Clients served in 1999	361
Elderly	71%
People with disabilities	61%
Families with children	11%

*Percentages reflect some instances of households occupied by more than one priority group.

Nevada's Weatherization Program prioritizes services to the elderly, people with disabilities, and families with children. These low-income households are often on fixed incomes or rely on income assistance programs and are most vulnerable to volatile changes in energy markets. Weatherization measures provide a permanent buffer against future fluctuations in energy prices and supply.

MAXIMUM RETURNS

During the Depression, the federal government took a gamble on Nevada and constructed the \$165 million Hoover Dam. The structure was specifically designed to optimize the dam's shape and the earth's gravity to produce maximum power for the state. Similarly, the Weatherization Program maximizes energy savings in low-income homes by utilizing advanced technologies and techniques.

The Nevada Department of Business and Industry administers the Weatherization Program and two local agencies deliver energy efficiency services to eligible residents across the state. Professionally trained crews use computerized energy audits and advanced diagnostic equipment, such as the blower door, to determine the most cost-effective energy efficiency measures appropriate for each home.

Nevada crews also test heating units and appliances for carbon monoxide and gas leaks.

Typical weatherization services include installing insulation; duct sealing; and mitigating heat loss through windows, doors, and other infiltration points. Clients are also educated on basic energy efficiency practices.

Nevada prides itself on the professionalism and courtesy of its workforce. Weatherization crews receive technical training at national conferences, regional training meetings, and in the field. These highly skilled technicians provide comprehensive energy efficiency solutions for low-income families.

Weatherization crews also serve as an energy efficiency resource to the community. Local agencies can bridge the service delivery gap between federal, state, and community programs and agencies.

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG SAVINGS

With Las Vegas glowing on the skyline, Nevada is keenly aware of the state's high level of energy consumption. The major marquees in Las Vegas consume enough electricity to power 1,000 homes per day. Nevadans welcome programs like Weatherization that provide long-term energy solutions for low-income individuals and the community.



Nevada uses the blower door to identify and mitigate air infiltration.

Up to 80% of the money spent on energy in low-income communities immediately leaves the area. Weatherization measures reduce energy costs for low-income households, which enables them to purchase other essential items at local stores. Keeping money in the community spurs economic growth and creates additional jobs. Every \$1 retained produces an estimated \$3 in multiplier benefits.

In addition, reducing residential energy demand decreases electricity generation and avoids emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, and other pollutants. This improves local air quality and reduces adverse health effects, particularly asthma. Weatherization measures also mitigate residential and power plant emissions of greenhouse gases.

WEATHERIZATION WORKS!

Weatherization produces an impressive range of benefits for low-income households and communities. Nationally, for every \$1 invested in the program, Weatherization returns \$2.10 in energy-related benefits. Weatherization measures reduce national energy consumption and dampen demand for imported oil. Weatherization works for Nevada and America!



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, CONTACT:

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Visit the Weatherization Web site at: www.eren.doe.gov/buildings/weatherization_assistance
or call the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Clearinghouse at: 1-800-DOE-3732



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